

Amendments to the Claims:

What is claimed is:

1. (withdrawn) An inflatable box comprised of a rigid material, attached to an inner inflatable cushion with a bottom that is attached to the inside walls of the box which can be inflated through a valve, wherein:

the box includes bottom closing flaps

the inflatable cushion covers the inside walls and the bottom of the box;

and a valve which connects the outside of the box through a hollow lumen to the inside of the cushion allowing air to pass through from the outside of the box to the inside of the cushion.

2. (withdrawn) A method for packaging an article using an inflatable box comprising:

an outer rigid cardboard material or the like with bottom and top flaps, and a flexible inflatable cushion that is attached to the inside walls of the box which can be inflated through a valve;

wherein the method to inflate the box comprising the steps of:

closing the bottom flaps of the box;

placing the articles to be shipped into the box;

closing the top flaps of the box;

filling the box with air through the valve.

3. (withdrawn) The inflatable box according to claim 1 wherein said filling medium is air.
4. (withdrawn) The inflatable box according to claim 1 wherein said box does not contain a dunnage bag.

5. (withdrawn) The inflatable box according to claim 1 wherein said box does not contain any independent parts which are placed in the box after or before inflation of the cushion.

6. (currently amended) A package that cushions items being shipped, comprising:

a box having a hollow interior defined by a top wall, a bottom wall, and sidewalls interconnecting said top and bottom walls;

a first inflatable bladder ~~disposed~~ affixed within said hollow interior of said box, ~~wherein~~ said first inflatable bladder ~~is being~~ connected to each said sidewall, ~~and wherein~~ said first inflatable bladder ~~is being~~ disposed in protecting relation to said bottom wall of said box;

an opening formed in said box;

a normally closed valve disposed in sealing engagement with said opening;

said normally closed valve having an inlet port external to said box;

said inlet port adapted to be connected to a source of gaseous fluid under pressure;

said inlet port being in fluid communication with said first inflatable bladder so that said first inflatable bladder is inflated when said source of gaseous fluid under pressure is connected to said inlet port; and

~~whereby~~ said first inflatable bladder when inflated engulfs said item being shipped and serves as a cushioning means for said item during shipping.

7. (currently amended) The package of claim 6, further comprising:

a second inflatable bladder disposed in said hollow interior of said box in cooperative relation to said first inflatable bladder to provide an enhanced cushioning means that engulfs said item being shipped; and

~~wherein the said box has~~ having four side walls and closable flaps on the top horizontal and bottom horizontal sections.

8. (withdrawn) A method for cushioning a package for items being shipped, comprising the steps of:

providing a box having a hollow interior defined by a top wall, a bottom wall, and sidewalls interconnecting said top and bottom walls;

adapting said box to be opened and closed so that an item may be introduced into or removed from said box;

forming an opening in said box;

positioning a normally closed valve in sealing engagement with said opening;

disposing an inlet port of said normally closed valve external to said box;

adapting said inlet port to be connected to a source of gaseous fluid under pressure;

disposing an outlet port of said normally closed valve within said hollow interior of said box;

providing fluid communication between said outlet port and said first inflatable bladder so that said first inflatable bladder is inflated when said source of gaseous fluid under pressure is connected to said inlet port;

whereby said first inflatable bladder when inflated serves as a cushioning means for said item during shipping.

9. (withdrawn) The method of claim 8, further comprising the steps of:

disposing a second inflatable bladder in said hollow interior of said box in cooperative relation to said first inflatable bladder to provide an enhanced cushioning means.

10. (withdrawn) The method of claim 8, further comprising the steps of

inflating said first inflatable bladder after said item has been inserted into said hollow interior of said box; and

deflating said first inflatable bladder prior to removal of said item from said box.

11. (cancelled).

12. (previously presented) The package of claim 6, further comprising:

said first inflatable bladder being disposed in protecting relation to said sidewalls of said box.

13. (currently amended) The package of claim 6, further comprising:

~~wherein~~ said box is being made of a rigid material.

14. (currently amended) The package of claim 6, further comprising:

~~wherein~~ said box is being made of a semi-rigid material.

15. (currently amended) The package of claim 6, further comprising:

a hand pump in fluid connection with said first inflatable bladder.

16. (currently amended) The package of claim 6, further comprising:

~~wherein~~ said first inflatable bladder further comprises a bottom inflatable lumen shaped to cover said bottom wall of said box.

17. (currently amended) The package of claim 6, further comprising:

~~wherein~~ said first inflatable bladder further comprises an inflatable lumen disposed near said top wall of said box and is adapted to inflate between said box and said item.

18. (currently amended) The package of claim 6, further comprising:

~~wherein~~ said first inflatable bladder further comprises a bleed valve disposed in fluid communication with said first inflatable bladder.